

Spring Cleaning for Water Distribution Pipes to Start March 21

The Washington Aqueduct is responsible for treating drinking water for the District of Columbia, Arlington County, and Falls Church, Virginia. The disinfectant used to maintain disinfection in the distribution system pipelines in the Washington Aqueduct's service area will temporarily switch from chloramine to chlorine from March 21 through May 2, 2011.

This annual change is part of a routine maintenance program to keep the water system in the District of Columbia, Arlington County and Falls Church clean and free of potentially harmful bacteria. A temporary switch to chlorine with system-wide flushing is done to maintain water quality throughout the year. This is standard practice for many water systems that use chloramine during the majority of the year.

Individuals and business owners who take special precautions to remove chloramine from tap water, such as dialysis centers, medical facilities and aquatic pet owners, should continue to take the same precautions during the temporary switch to chlorine. Most methods for removing chloramine from tap water are effective in removing chlorine. Individuals with special health concerns should consult with a health care provider on the use of tap water.

During this time, individuals may notice a change in the taste and smell of drinking water. Local water authorities recommend running the cold water tap for five to 10 minutes and refrigerating cold tap water for a few hours to reduce taste and odor. Water filters are also effective in reducing chlorine taste and odor. For more information, please contact the appropriate water authority below.

DC Water: 202-612-3440 (Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.) or 202-612-3400 (24-hour)

Arlington County: 703-228-6570 (Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.) or 703-228-6555 (24-hour)

Falls Church City: 703-248-5071 (Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.) or 703-248-5044 (24-hour)